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ABSTRACT

This publication describes Monsters Make Believe, a computer-based, teacher-developed program for enhancing reading and writing instruction in the elementary grades. Motivation to read and write is provided by the creation of monsters. The software can even offer a vehicle that is able to write a descriptive paragraph. An overview describes a possible use of the software with a computer where a teacher reads a classic scary story and sets the mood with audio effects, and students are anxious to create the monster. The final writing can be a team effort where students list the descriptive adjectives, use them to form sentences, and finally form a paragraph. Students would choose a background, build the monster, save the creation to a disk, print it, and then write a description. The general objectives are described including using the computer to encourage writing, creating a monster graphic using a software program, writing a descriptive paragraph, encouraging reading, increasing computer skills, and developing higher order thinking skills. An outline/overview section describes lessons for 9 days of class work. Each lesson plan covers objectives, activities, materials, and homework. (JB)

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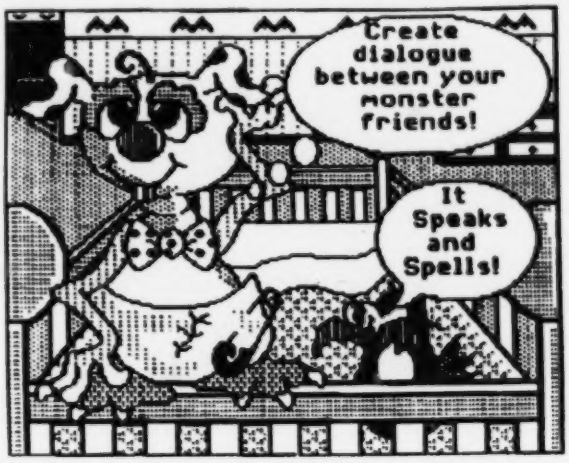
## Monsters Make Stories

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## Monsters Make Stories

Computers continue to offer opportunities to increase student participation and learning. Motivation to read and write can be provided by the creation of monsters and even offer a vehicle that can write a descriptive paragraph of their own creation. The computer and a software program can provide that montivation. The program Monsters and Make-Believe™ prove creating monsters can be great motivators. The students can "create an endless cast of cute and creepy characters to write about.".

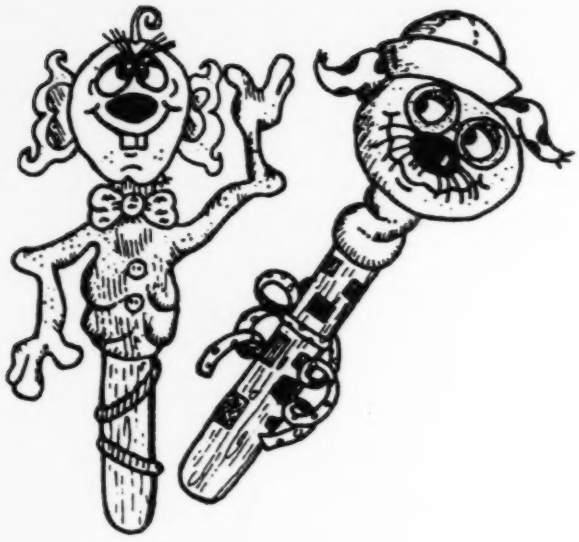
Use your imagination and your students' imagination. Read a classic scary story, set the mood with audio effects, and the students will be anxious to create their monster. They choose a background, build the monster using the parts from the body shop, save the creation to a disk, print, and then they are ready to write a description. This final step can be an exciting process as the team lists the descriptive adjectives, use them to form sentences, and finally form a paragraph. The graphic picture is joined with the descriptive paragraph by class sharing or the student taking home the finished printed project.

All during the process the students are working on all types of skills: computer, reading, writing, and cooperative learning. The process of compiling all this data requires problem solving and high order thinking skills. It is possible to extend the activity by having the entire class assemble a book of scary stories. Your imagination is the only limit.

The lab pak program allows for multi-station use, or a single disk can be used as an individual station. This unit is planned for use in a computer lab with 30 middle school students per class. The implementation requires approximately ten, 50 minute class periods when multiple stations and software are available. It can easily be adapted for smaller groups and elementary levels.

## Monsters Make Stories
## General Objectives

1. To use the computer to encourage writing.
2. To create a monster graphic using a software program.
3. To write a descriptive paragraph
4. To encourage reading.
5. To increase computer skills.
6. To develop higher order thinking skills.



## Outline/Overview

Day 1

Introduction of the Unit.
Read a scary story. (see Bibliography list)
Assign partner and work station.

Day 2
Demonstration of the Monster and Make Believe program.*

Day 3, 4
Work with program to create and print Monster.*

Day 5
Develop paragraph with partner about the graphic creation.

Day 6,7
Type in paragraph, edit, save to disk. Print.

Day 8, 9
Complete printing and share paragraphs.

*Lesson Plans follow

Day 1

**Lesson Plan: To introduce unit.**

**Objectives:** To listen as a story is being read. To set the mood for the Monster creations. To appreciate literature. To encourage the students to check out books from the library.

**Activities:** Read to the students or have one of them read out loud from the books checked out from the media center. See bibliography. Outline process of the unit. Assign partners and work stations for the project.

**Materials:** See bibliography list.

**Homework:** Why not check out a scary story book from the media center? Plan ideas for monster.

Day 2

**Introduction Lesson Plan: To use the software program.**

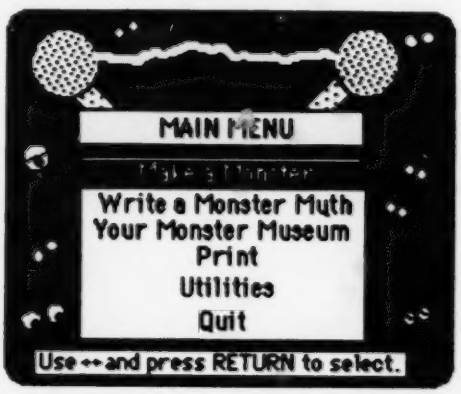
**Objectives:** Overview of techniques for creating a monster.
Develop computer skills.

**Activity: Demonstration**

At a computer, show the students the options on the Main Menu screen. Create a monster together, detail steps from using a background, to adding body parts (Use H and V keys to flip parts), and finally how to save. The steps for printing should be demonstrated later. If the students are not computer literate more details of computer operation are necessary.

**Materials:** Monsters & Make-Believe ™
Apple IIe computer (128 K)
Large screen monitor, if possible
Data disks to save (any DOS initialized disk)

**Homework:** Check out a book! Read a scary story.




**Practice with the program yourself FIRST!**

**5**

Day 3,4

**Lesson Plan: Working with the program**

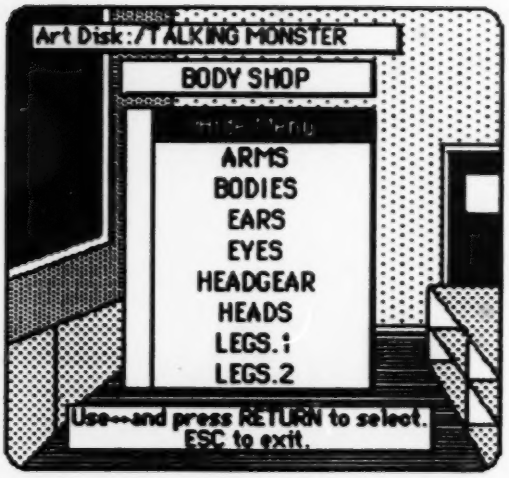
**Objectives**: Students will learn to work with a partner. To use the software program. To do problem solving to create their monster. To use computer skills to save and print the monster.

**Activities:** Students will work with a partner, together they will use the software program to create, design, save and print their monster creation. Teacher should work with groups as necessary.

NOTE: Students don't all complete their creations at the same time but printing is a slow process, students may need to begin planning, and writing their story.

**Materials**: 15 program disks (3 lab paks)
15 Apple IIe (min. 128 K memory) computer stations
Printers
Data disks
Multicolored colored ribbons
Or colored pencils for students to use to color

**Homework**: Begin ideas on story/paragraph

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Day 5,6,7

**Lesson Plan: To write the paragraph.**

**Objectives:** To list adjectives to describe picture. To use the adjectives to make sentences. To write a paragraph that includes a topic sentence. To write a paragraph that contains 3 or 4 sentences. To edit and revise paragraphs using rules for capitalization, puncuation, and correct word usage.

**Activities: DEMONSTRATION**
Use large screen monitor to show a Monster. Together with the class develop a list of adjectives that describe the picture. Use the words to write sentences and develop a class paragraph. Students with their partner will develop their own list of adjectives, write descriptive sentences to create a paragraph about their monster. Edit and revise at the computer. Students may use word processor program if the story is long. The Monster and Make Believe ™ Program has limited space for long text.

**Materials:** Printed out of monsters.
Revised paragraphs.
Programs to word process. Printers to print.

**Homework**: Work with ideas about paragraphs.

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Monsters Make Stories

Names: _____

_____

Period _____

Adjectives that describe your creation:

Draft Paragraph:

8

## Bibliography


Alcock, Viven, Ghostly Companions, *audio Cassette*

DeWeese, Gene, Adventures of the Two minute Werewolf, *video*

MacDonald, Margaret Read, When the Lights Go Out, *book*

Poe, Edgar Allen, Edgar Allen Poe Short Stories, *audio cassette*

Schwartz, Alvin, Scary Stories to Tell in The Dark, *book*

Schwarz, Alvin, More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark, *audio cassette*

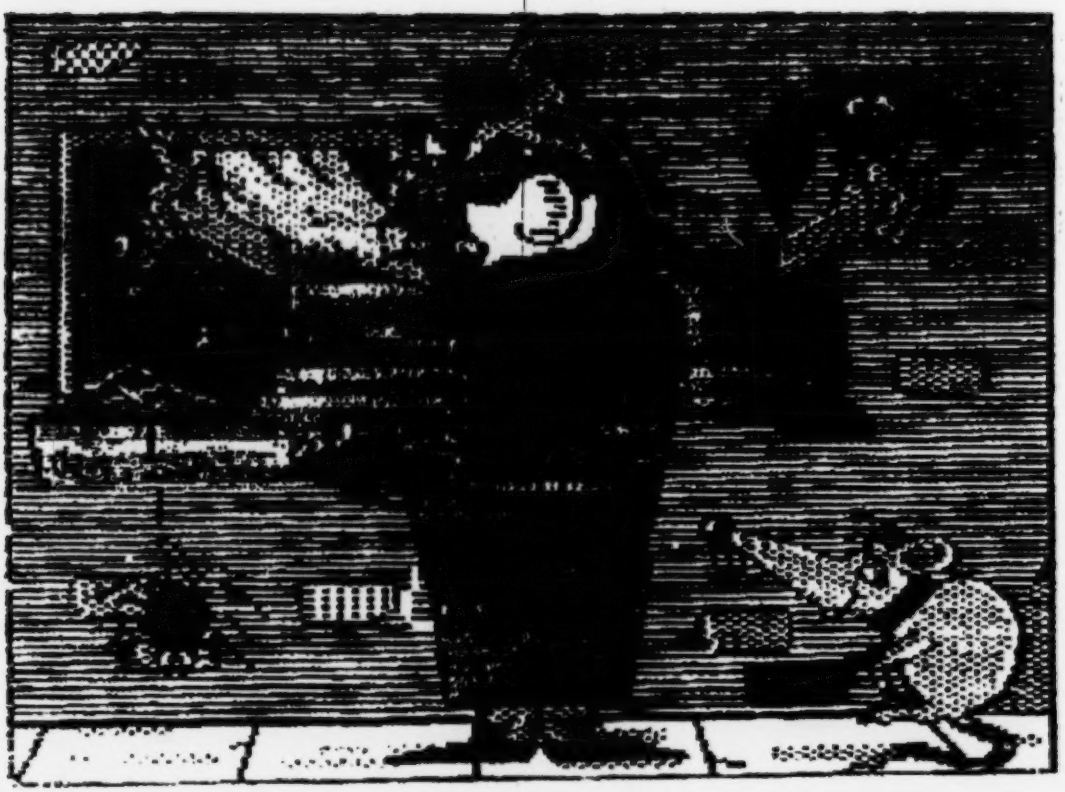
Sherlock Holmes on Scary Poems for Rotten Kids, *CD Rom*

**Recommended Resources**

Pelican Software, Monsters & Make-Believe™, lab pak, 338 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, CT 06430, 1988. ($87.95 per 5 disk lab pak or $43.95 each)

Slavin, Robert. Cooperative Learning, New York: Longman, 1983.

## Appendix





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"My friend the Wizzard"

The name of my monster is Blizzard the Wizzard. His favorite hobby is trying on wild and zany hats. He wears a blue robe which is five sizes too big. Blizzard was a black-haired magician until he went "punk". Now his hair is blue. His feet were shrunk when one of his potions designed especially for his daughter Prancer the Dancer, accidently fell down. I used to know what color his eyes were before he put on his super tinted sunglasses. Unfortunetly, he

forgot to let the super glue dry and they became a permanent accessory. He went mad trying to figure out what thhe chemicals said on the other side of the containers. This is all I can tell about my friend, since he is now in an institution. It isn't my fault he is so stubborn.

# SOFTWARE EVALUATION

Name_____ Class_____

Name of Software_____

Manufacturer_____

Number of people required_____

Description of software_____

_____

_____

Purpose of software_____

_____

_____

How long did it take to learn?_____

What did you like about the program?_____

_____

_____

What did you dislike about the program?_____

_____

_____

Program Rating

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Directions | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Graphics | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Ease of operation | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Software rating | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |

Would you want to use this program again?_____



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